Day 0 – 5/20 – M

My dad and I landed at Wuxi’s Sunan Shoufang Int’l Airport around 10p. From the airport, it was about a 20-30 minute car ride to CIT. I was dropped off at a bright entryway to some building that was apparently some kind of “academic exchange center,” but also functioned as some type of… room and board… where I received an RFID (I think) room key for a room assignment on the 2nd floor.

With a large suitcase, a rollaboard, and a backpack, I planned on taking the elevator. What I didn’t plan on was President Jiang (the literal President of CIT) standing next to me. What I was even more surprised about was how this guy, a president, was staying at this place overnight, on the CIT campus, because apparently he had just finished working (late at night) and was going to spend the night at work, basically. So, my first interaction with the president was late at night, after being exhausted from a full day of flying and not looking my best… this president is more dedicated to his line of work than a lot of people I know, such that he practically lives at work. That is another level of dedication. That’s just impressive.

Knowing I had another stay the next week, and being very exhausted from a full evening of traveling and arriving late at night, I called it a night and went to sleep far too quickly.

Day 1 – 5/21 – T

Unfortunately, I was still in Madison (according to the time zone I was still used to, apparently), so woke up at 5am, which gave me about 4 hours of sleep… that’s considered a good night, btw.

My attention turned to a folder containing pink slips next to the bed – held together by paper clips – and appeared to be cut from a full sheet of paper. From running it on the Apple translate app, it looks like they were meal vouchers – a stack for breakfast, a stack for lunch/dinner. The breakfast stack covers up to 8 bucks, and the lunch/dinner stack covers up to 15 bucks… each…

By this time, the sun had started to show up, so I went downstairs and out the back door to look for the staff cafeteria, which is apparently the building next door. It wasn’t a long walk – about a minute – but I was not very excited about the warmer weather, being used to the frigid midwestern winters and having left from a really chilly Madison a few days earlier.

Breakfast at the staff canteen had a few options. There were fried eggs, hard-boiled eggs (both boiled in tea and boiled in water), huge dumplings (vegetable or some unidentified meat that I was not good at figuring out) that they apparently called “baozi,” some kind of steamed yams, plain vegetables, congee, and hot soy milk. I grabbed 2 fried eggs, a “meat baozi,” vegetables, and a cup of soy milk. Next to the food options, there was a wood table where a lady had a register available to ring people up. I comfortably used one of the breakfast vouchers for the meal, and grabbed a chair near a window. Because I was hungry, I thought the food was good, but I imagine I’d have something different to say after I get used to this new time zone.

After eating, I went to the lake, also next door, and got a chance to check out the… boardwalk…? I then returned to my room.